

Existing law provides for a high school career option program, consisting of an academic major (college prep. courses) and a career major (academic courses and modern vocational studies). New law additionally requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to develop and adopt requirements for career major programs offered by school boards and to issue a career diploma to students who successfully complete such requirements. Provides that a career diploma shall be considered a regular standard diploma and be recognized by institutions under the management and supervision of the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges (LCTCS board).

Existing law requires students, by the end of 8th grade, to develop a plan for a sequence of courses which is consistent with goals for one year after graduation. Prior law named this a "Five-Year Educational Plan". New law changes its name to a "Five-Year Individual Graduation Plan".

Prior law required a 9th and 10th grade student to pursue the core curriculum required for his chosen major by his school, including required course work and electives. New law instead requires a student to pursue the curriculum for his chosen major as approved by BESE throughout high school. Existing law allows students to change from one major to another at the end of any school year.

Existing law provides that a career major shall provide a student with greater technical skill and a strong academic core and requires major to be linked to postsecondary options; to prepare students to pursue a degree or certification from a postsecondary institution, an industry-based training or certification, an apprenticeship, the military, or immediate entrance into a career field; to be primarily designed for students not initially college bound; and to provide such students with alternatives to immediate entrance into a four-year institution after graduation. Prior law required that the career major be offered to each high school student. New law requires that it be offered to each high school student enrolled in a school system that offers a career major program and adds that when available and appropriate, students pursuing such a major may participate in dual enrollment with an institution under the management and supervision of the LCTCS board or a business internship or work-study program.

Prior law required each high school to offer at least one career major program. New law requires public school systems to develop and offer at least one career major program, subject to BESE approval, and provides that any such system may be granted a waiver by BESE for good cause.

Existing law requires schools to review majors each year and expand offerings as appropriate, including courses offered through articulation, correspondence, and technological methods. New law adds courses offered through dual enrollment to list of expanded offerings.

Existing law requires students in a career major program to complete an academic core of courses and a career and technical sequence of courses. New law provides for various changes to and retentions of the career major course requirements.

Prior law required career major graduation requirements to consist of requirements mandated by BESE for all high school students, including all testing and course requirements and all provisions of existing law relative to required courses of study (R.S. 17:261 through 279). New law instead requires public school boards seeking to establish a career major to submit a proposed career major curriculum to BESE for approval.

New law requires a student seeking to pursue a career major curriculum to meet one of the following conditions:

- (1) The student has fulfilled all requirements established by BESE and the local public school board for promotion to 9th grade.
- (2) The student is at least 15 or will turn 15 during the upcoming school year and has scored at least approaching basic on either the English/language arts or math component of the 8th grade LEAP test and meets criteria established by the local

school system's pupil progression plan to enter the 9th grade for the purpose of pursuing a career major curriculum. Such student must also complete a summer remediation program in the subject area of any LEAP test component on which he scored at the unsatisfactory level. A student who fails to satisfactorily complete summer remediation must complete developmental courses (for credit) as deemed necessary to be prepared to undertake the coursework required for his chosen career major.

New law requires BESE to certify that the pupil progression plan of each local school system that promotes a student who did not meet 8th grade LEAP standards to the 9th grade contains specified requirements.

New law requires a student seeking to pursue a career major to have written permission of his parent or legal guardian after consultation with a guidance counselor or school administrator and a determination that participation in a career major curriculum and pursuit of a career diploma is appropriate and in the student's best interest.

Prior law provided for career major programs to be designed by a curriculum design team, for submission of proposed curricula by such team, for a career major pilot program, for implementation timelines, and for certain exempt school systems. New law repeals prior law.

Effective upon signature of governor (July 1, 2009).

(Amends R.S. 17:183.1, 183.2, and 183.3; Repeals R.S. 17:183.4, 183.6, 183.7, 183.8, and 183.9)